

d. DISCIPLINE: The pastor, together with a majority of the full Board of Directors, may vote to remove from office any deacon for disloyalty, unbecoming conduct or dereliction of duty. The pastor, together with a majority of the full Board of Directors, may impose for cause such lesser discipline as they may deem appropriate.

e. Any specific matters of congregational approval or appeal not contained herein are left to local church option.

2. EXHORTERS:

a. QUALIFICATIONS: Exhorters are qualified persons who feel called by the Lord to professional Christian ministry and for a limited time may serve in this position as a test of their calling under the direction of their pastor with the approval of the Board of Directors in their local churches. The term of an exhorter shall be for one (1) year. No person shall serve as an exhorter for more than five (5) terms. Persons seeking this position should have the same identifiable qualities as those required for the professional Christian ministry.

b. REQUIREMENTS: Candidates for exhorter shall be members in good standing in their local church. Upon the pastor's recommendation the Board of Directors may approve the candidate as an exhorter. Assuming this post, the exhorter will engage in a program of spiritual and practical study under the direction of the pastor or at any appropriate recognized educational institution.

c. DUTIES: Under the close supervision of the pastor, the exhorter may perform all duties as listed for deacons. At the discretion of the pastor the Exhorter may perform other duties within the area of Christian services. Exhorters shall not serve as assistant pastor, associate pastor, interim pastor or pastor of any church or mission. An Exhorter may be assigned to function as worship coordinator of a church, mission or study group where the pulpit is vacant.

d. DISCIPLINE: Reasons and procedures for discipline or removal of exhorters are identical to those given in these By-Laws for deacons.

e. Any specific matters of congregational approval or appeal not contained herein are left to local church option.

ARTICLE V GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATION AND OFFICERS

37 A. GOVERNMENT:

1. This Fellowship acknowledges the Holy Scriptures interpreted by the Holy Spirit in conscience and faith as its guide in faith, discipline and government.

2. The government of this Fellowship is vested in its elders, ministers, and church delegates, who exert the right of control in all of its affairs, subject to the provisions of its Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws.

3. This Fellowship is amenable to no outside ecclesiastical jurisdiction, but accepts the obligation of mutual consent, comity and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of other churches, and does pledge itself to share in their common aims and endeavors subject to the expressed approval of its membership.

4. Geographical Districts and District Conferences, as defined by these By-Laws, are set forth for the sole purposes of Christian fellowship, mutual cooperation and other objectives as set forth in these By-Laws.

5. A local church of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches is that church which subscribes to the government and doctrine of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, and has been chartered by the same, and is listed in the minutes of the General Conference.

6. The government of the local chartered churches in the Fellowship is vested in its members who exert the right to control all of its affairs, subject to the provisions of its Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, and those of the General Conference of the Fellowship. The local chartered church is amenable only to its membership and the By-Laws of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

20 B. FELLOWSHIP:

1. ELDERS: The Board of Elders of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches is that body authorized by the General Conference to carry on the administrative affairs of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches between General Conferences in an orderly manner. This board shall consist of seven (7) members, which shall be expanded to nine (9) members by the General Conference once the number of chartered churches reaches one hundred (100). It is desirable that the General Conference shall elect members of the Board of Elders so that this board is geographically representative of the Fellowship.

a. QUALIFICATIONS: Elders must be those individuals of obvious spiritual quality and leadership who are mature and have sound judgment and a proven record of accomplishment within the Fellowship.

b. REQUIREMENTS: A Nominations Committee composed of one lay person and one minister from each District elected respectively by the lay delegates and clergy at the District Conference immediately preceding the General Conference shall receive and review any and all nominations for the position of Elder. This committee will then present to the General Conference qualified nominees for the purpose of filling the position(s) available. Nominations may be made from the floor of General Conference. The Nominations Committee shall make its report at the first business meeting of General Conference. The nominees shall present themselves before the delegates for open questioning as determined by the Nominations Committee. The election shall be held no less than two (2) days after the nominations. The term of office for a member of the Board of Elders will be four (4) years.



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act as moderator of congregational business meetings. Associate or assistant pastors, other ministerial personnel, uncompensated and compensated personnel shall be appointed by the pastor subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. The pastor shall act as personnel director of the local church staff, shall have the authority to delegate such responsibilities and duties as to him/her seem wise, and shall, with the approval of the Board of Directors, determine compensation, vacation periods and titles of office of the staff.

Pastors may be removed from office only for good and sufficient reasons by a majority vote of the congregation at any special meeting called for that purpose by a three-fourths (¾) vote of the full Board of Directors, or by petition to the Clerk or other officer of the Board of Directors by at least 25% of the members in good standing of the congregation. The pastor must be given written notice of the charges within two (2) weeks. At that time the Pastor goes on inactive status but remains fully compensated until final action by the congregation. The pastor has the right to appear on his/her behalf before a congregational meeting. The action of the congregation is final. If a special meeting is called to remove a pastor the District Coordinator and the Board of Elders must be given notice that such action is being taken. The District Coordinator, in conjunction with the Board of Elders, must send a representative to attend said meeting as an impartial observer. If the pastor is removed the Board of Directors will meet immediately after the meeting with the representative of the District Coordinator and Board of Elders to elect a worship coordinator who will serve until the pulpit is filled. The Board of Directors will confer with the District Coordinator and the Board of Elders of the Fellowship as to available candidates for the office of pastor.

2. BOARD OF DIRECTORS: The Board of Directors elected by the local church body shall consist of from five (5) to nine (9) members of the local church who are in good standing; they shall hold office for a term of three (3) years with the exception of the pastor who will hold office for as long as he/she occupies the pulpit of that church. The term of one-third of the members of the board shall expire each year and other members shall be elected to fill the vacancies thus created. In the event of the resignation or death of a board member the remaining members of the board shall appoint a member of the church to fill the vacancy until the next congregational meeting.

The Board of Directors shall have charge of all matters pertaining to the Articles of Incorporation, church property, finances and physical affairs of the local church body. This board shall have the responsibility of collecting and disbursing funds, keeping adequate church records, and making reports thereof to the local congregation and through their district to the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. The Board of Directors shall serve as pulpit committee upon the event of any pastoral vacancy. When they have chosen suitable qualified candidates the Board shall present them to the congregation for approval at a specially called meeting or at the next regular business meeting. Every local church financial account is required to have a minimum of two (2) signatures which shall be the Treasurer, and 1) another Board member, or 2) the pastor.

Local churches of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches must not condone disloyalty or unbecoming conduct on the part of any member of the Board of Directors, therefore, the Board may remove, by a majority vote of the full board, any of their

members guilty of the above. A petition presented to the board and signed by 20% of the members in good standing may also initiate such procedure. This action of the Board of Directors may be subject to review by a vote of the congregation at its next regular business meeting or at a special meeting which may be called and must be in accordance with the provisions of the By-Laws of this Fellowship and the By-Laws of the local church.

The Board of Directors shall be subject to these By-Laws, local Articles of Incorporation, or local By-Laws, if such exist, and to the approval or disapproval by action of their local congregation as provided for in any of the above. It is incumbent upon the Board of Directors of each local church to provide that church with a set of By-Laws or Standard Operating Procedures.

3. Any specific matters of congregational approval or appeal not covered herein are left to the local church option.

ARTICLE VI APPROVAL OF LOCAL CHURCH BODIES

To become affiliated with the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches the following procedures are set forth:

A. STUDY GROUP: If a group of individuals is interested in associating with the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches it is to contact the Coordinator of their district or proper Fellowship board. The District Coordinator will then be in contact with the District Board of Home Missions which must concur with him/her in order to authorize a study group. If approved, a worship coordinator will be appointed by the District Coordinator and the Board of Elders will be officially notified of this action.

B. MISSION: After functioning as a study group for at least three (3) months a group may petition the District Coordinator — or the proper Fellowship board — to be officially recognized as a mission. They must certify in their petition that at least twenty-five (25) persons are actively involved in the life of the group and that they are receiving adequate financial support to maintain the work of a mission. The District Coordinator will confer with the District Board of Home Missions or the proper Fellowship board and, along with the Board of Elders, will decide on the petition of the group. If the recognition is granted the mission will then appoint as interim pastor a minister of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. Their selection must be approved by the District Coordinator and the District Board of Home Missions or proper Fellowship board. After two (2) years as a Study Group, the Board of Home Missions or proper Fellowship board may determine that a Study Group in an area of limited numerical potential may also petition the Board of Home Missions or proper Fellowship board for mission status.

It shall be the responsibility of the membership to elect yearly a clerk, treasurer, other officers as needed, and a delegate for District and General Conferences. The interim pastor and officers, acting as an Interim Board of Directors, shall exercise the provisions of Article VII (Church Membership) of these By-Laws. The provisions of this paragraph and their exercise must be approved by the District Coordinator and the Board of Home Missions or proper Fellowship board.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF BOSTON

BEFORE YOU APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP:

It is strongly suggested that you take ample and sufficient time to familiarize yourself with the Metropolitan Community Church of Boston, its leaders, its people, and its ministry. Church membership is one of the most serious steps a person can take. It is a life-long commitment which should not be rushed, or taken as routine, or pursued solely on the basis of emotion.

WHEN YOU HAVE MADE YOUR DECISION TO PURSUE MEMBERSHIP:

Fill out this application and return it to the Pastor. She/he will then contact you to discuss your participation in pre-membership workshop(s).

ALL FOLLOWING INFORMATION KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

NAME _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE #s WHERE YOU CAN BE REACHED _____

JOB INFORMATION (OPTIONAL) _____

1. With what denomination were you affiliated before becoming involved with Metropolitan Community Church of Boston?
2. What other denominations have you been affiliated with (if any)?
3. What was the name of, location of, and minister of the last local parish you attended?
4. Are you still affiliated with this or any other church/denomination?
5. Are you a registered, voting member in any other church?
6. Do you intend to maintain membership in your former/present denomination, if you are received into membership in MCC Boston?

(We ask you to consider the reality of supporting more than one church membership/affiliation in terms of regular worship attendance, devotion of time and energy to the work of the church, and pledged financial contribution.)
7. When and where were you baptised? Will you submit a copy of your baptismal certificate if requested?
8. Will you faithfully covenant to make and keep a regular pledge of financial support for the work and ministry of MCC Boston?

IN YOUR OWN WORDS, PLEASE EXPLAIN:

9. Why do you want to become a member of MCC Boston?

10. What do you expect as a member of MCC Boston?

11. What gifts, services, talents, etc. will you bring to MCC Boston to help further our witness and ministry?

DATE: _____

BY MY SIGNATURE I REQUEST MEMBERSHIP: _____

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